



Volume 26 Issue 3

Date March 2010

A message from Pastor Quinn

I Am the Light of the World

“As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me.” -- Jesus

It's hard to get things done in the dark. Darkness is a hindrance to accomplishing a task. That's why most jobs are done during the day. During the day there is light to see what you are doing. Light makes work possible. It facilitates all kinds of work. The work Jesus was talking about was the most important work in the world.

The people of Jesus' day were in the dark. They were lost in the darkness of sin. Jesus knew that. That's why he came to the sin darkened world—to bring light and life, to save it. The prophet Isaiah had spoken about his arrival. “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light” (Isaiah 9:2). “Arise, shine for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you” (Isaiah 60:1). When Jesus arrived and began his ministry there was another problem. The people were in the dark about who Jesus was. “In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it” (John 1:4, 5). The Pharisees did not believe Jesus was the Messiah. The temple guards they sent were not convinced either. The crowds were confused about who Jesus was. Even the members of Jesus own family didn't believe in him. Jesus' answer to all of them was this: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12).

His critics still did not understand. They said he needed witnesses to prove who he said he was. He pointed them to his heavenly Father who had been

with him from the beginning and had sent him into this dark world in the first place. To further prove his authority Jesus healed a man who was in the dark—literally. There was a man who had been born blind. Jesus' disciples asked if the man had sinned or if his parents had. Jesus said that he was born this way “so the work of God might be displayed in his life.” Then Jesus healed him of his blindness—a powerful witness of who Jesus is. Even with all of this evidence, many of the people of Jesus' day remained in their spiritual blindness. They failed to recognize the light. You can read all about it in John chapters 7-9.

The people of our day are in the same kind of darkness as those in Jesus' day. People are still lost in the darkness of sin. People are still in the dark about who Jesus is. Something else is the same too. Jesus is still the light of the world. He is the one who brings light to this sin darkened world through the work he did while he was in this world. Jesus' substitutionary life and death is still all things to all people in this world. It is the only work that brings life and light to those dead in the darkness of sin. But what about those who don't understand who Jesus is? Jesus has a plan for that too. “You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:14-16). Jesus has made you a light. You are a light which leads people to the Light. You lead people to Jesus. You lead your children. You lead your family. You lead your friends. You lead those you work with. You lead those who live next door. Jesus has made you a light to do the most important work in the world. You are privileged to proclaim his Word so the Holy Spirit will turn the light on for those who live in the dark. Jesus is the

light. Reflect his light. “As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world” (John 9:4,5). While you are in this world, be lights too.

Choir Time and Day Change

Please remember that there is a new day and a new time for Choir. Choir from now on will be held on Wednesday evenings beginning at 8:00 PM immediately after our Lenten worship services.

The choir at Good Shepherd needs more members. It is always a pleasure to hear the choir sing and if you have been blessed with a good singing voice and the time, why not volunteer and share your talent? The Easter season is almost upon us and this would be a perfect time to join the choir. If committing to an every week schedule at the present time isn't feasible, would you be able to make practices for the Easter and Christmas seasons? If you think you might be interested, please contact Amy Lindesmith, our choir director.

Coming Up in March:

March 6 Science and Art Fair at MLS
March 14 Time Change
March 28 Palm Sunday

Time Change

Daylight Savings Time begins Sunday, March 14th at 2 AM. Be sure to spring your clock ahead one hour.

Easter Offerings

Midweek Lenten Services Christian Relief Fund
Palm Sunday Crown of Life, Cadillac
Maundy Thursday Saint Martin, Roscommon
Good Friday—Pregnancy Counseling Center, Saginaw
Easter—Good Shepherd Scholarship Fund

Friendship isn't about whom you have known the longest but about who came and never left your side.

Lenten Soup Suppers

Good Shepherd is again having a soup supper before each Lenten service. Lenten evening services will be March 3, 10, 17, and 24. Sign up sheets are on the large bulletin board in the hallway. Please sign up so we will know how many to expect. All suppers are potluck with soup, bread, and dessert on the menu.

We study God's Word

Scripture Readings for March

March 7 Lent 3

Exodus 3:1-8b, 10-15
Psalm 38
1 Corinthians 10:1-13
Luke 13:1-9

March 14 Lent 4

Isaiah 12:1-6
Psalm 32
1 Corinthians 1:18-25
Luke 15: 1-3, 11b-32

March 21 Lent 5

Isaiah 43:16-21
Psalm 73
Philippians 3:8-14
Luke 20: 9-19

March 28 Palm Sunday

Zechariah 9:9, 10
Psalm 24
Philippians 2:5-11
Luke 19:28-40

Sound System Fund

The Voters' Assembly approved a sound system fund at their last meeting. The fund will be used to restore the existing speakers in the organ and add exterior speakers to balance the sound source for better quality without distortion. The microphone system will also be replaced for better quality in hearing. Both projects will greatly improve the quality of our services both in church and when the DVDs are shown over MCTV.

The organ portion is estimated to cost \$1500, and you may use a special offering envelope for this fund. Please designate on the envelope that it is for the Sound System Fund so it will be put in the right account. We look forward to these improvements to enhance our worship services.

We serve others in love.

Our shut-ins

Please call the church office, or see your paper copy of this newsletter, for information on our shut-ins.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Brighten someone's day. Remember them with a card and best wishes.

March Birthdays:

March 1	Jonathan Gunsell
March 6	Mike Browning
March 14	Laura Krueger
March 14	Angie Beyersdorf
March 14	Norene Garchow
March 16	Norman Retzloff
March 17	Susan Pifher
March 17	Jennifer Wirth
March 18	Bill Prince
March 22	Grace Johnson
March 22	Kyle Hocquard
March 26	Katelynn Pifher
March 26	Dane DeLong
March 28	Ruthanne Fick
March 28	Sue Rummel

Anniversaries in March:

March 25	Mike and Amy Browning
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Easter Worship Times

Sunrise Service 7:00 AM
Easter Brunch Following Early Service
Easter Festival Service 9:30 AM

Flowers for the Altar

The flower chart has a lot of blank spaces on it right now. Birthdays and anniversaries are always nice to be remembered by putting flowers on the altar that particular Sunday. If you would like to remember a special occasion or just in thanksgiving for the many blessings you have received, please check the sign-up sheet and put your name down for the Sunday you want fresh flowers for the altar.

Volunteers

No organization can function without a certain amount of volunteer time and churches, in particular, rely heavily on volunteers to fill in the corners for various projects. Folding church bulletins, listening to children read, being Picture Lady or Picture Dad, doing the Crusader Connection, and doing copy work for the teachers are just some of the things that volunteers are doing currently at Good Shepherd. If you are available for a couple of hours each week, please call the office at 835-4181 and see if there's something that you can help out with. We need you!

Good Shepherd Web Site – www.goodshepherdmidland.org

By Amy Lindesmith

Have you visited our web site lately? Whether you're a member looking for the latest announcements, or a visitor wanting directions to our church, you can find what you are looking for on our web site.

On every page, you will find the same banner across the top with our church name, a box along the bottom with contact information, and a navigation bar on the left with buttons for the 14 main pages. Below the buttons you will find our church's mission statement, "As sinners redeemed by the blood of Christ, we are called to thank, praise, and serve our Lord. To do this, we will *study* his Word, *share* the Truth with all people, and *serve* others in love." Our web site helps to show how we live out this statement.

Some pages are designed for both members and visitors to use. The **Home** page – www.goodshepherdmidland.org – is the introduction to our church and school, with basic information such as worship schedule, monthly calendar, and contact information for the Pastors and Principal. It's also where you'll find out about the most recent or upcoming worship service, including date and time(s). More details about the service can be found on the **Worship Information** page. **Daily Bible Readings** are available to read online (with passages linked to an online Bible), or you can download the monthly document and look up passages in your own Bible.

Members of Good Shepherd can be kept up-to-date online on the **Monthly Newsletters, Announcements, School News, Preschool News, Groups and Committees**, and **Links** pages. The most recent

church publications and information are available, including bulletin announcements, upcoming events, one year's worth of newsletters (minus the financial information, and with the calendar available separately), and the current members and meeting schedule for each of our groups and committees. The school and preschool's recent publications and information are on their News pages, including the two most recent Crusader Connections (during the school year only), handbooks, sports schedule, school year and month calendars, contact information, and links to other helpful sites for parents and children. The Links page will connect you to other web sites of our synod and its schools, as well as resources for all WELS members, for parents, for teens, and for children. This year, we added a **School Registration** page, where parents could download all the documents they need to register their child(ren) for attendance at our school.

Pages that especially visitors - and even some members - will find helpful include **Who We Are, Where We Are, What We Believe, What We Offer**, and **About Our School**. These pages are full of information describing us – what we are all about here at Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church and School. **Where We Are** includes an embedded Google map, where each visitor can put in their own starting address and get turn-by-turn directions to find us.

Web site statistics:

Each unique computer viewing our web site is counted once per month.

Number of unique visitors per month in 2009:

January – 219
February – 230
March – 80 (data available only for March 22-31)
April – 240
May – 184
June – 204
July – 224
August – 215
September – 211
October – 231
November – 181
December – 258

Average number of unique visitors per month (excluding March): 217

Top 5 pages viewed most often in 2009 - Home page, Announcements, About Our School, School News, and Worship Information.

Special Presentation on the War In Afghanistan

Ron Daniel gave an extremely interesting talk and slide presentation on Sunday, February 14 about the time he served in the Armed Forces while stationed in Afghanistan. Basically the country of Afghanistan is not united as a central country but consists of tribes with tribal leaders being very powerful. Many of the Afghani people are afraid that once the American military force leaves that the country will revert to what it was before.

The Afghani people are used to being invaded and ruled by other countries. Mountainous and desert-like in most places, still the country itself has served as a route for countries on either side of it.

We tend to think that in this 21st century that countries have a certain standard of living but there are still countries like Afghanistan that live back in the 19th century as far as progress is concerned.

We deeply appreciated Mr. Daniel's talk and inside glimpse of what is going on with our troops serving in Afghanistan.

Tomorrow is in God's Hands (from the March 1, 2003 Meditations)

"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." Matthew 6:34

"Why put off until tomorrow what I can worry about today?: Sad to say, that's the attitude many people seem to display these days. Perhaps you would count yourself among them. It's easy to fret about something that hasn't happened yet, isn't it? Sometimes we worry that something won't happen—that we won't get that raise or get that assignment done on time or get to see our grandchildren grow up. Other times we worry that something will happen—an economic downturn, a sickness, death.

Chances are that most of the things we worry about aren't things that happened to us in the past. They're things we fear might happen in the future.

"Tomorrow" brings with it elements of uncertainty, apprehension, even fear. The events of tomorrow aren't under our control. So we feel helpless to prevent them, and we therefore worry about them.

Maybe that's why Jesus concludes this segment of his Sermon on the Mount by saying: "Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Isn't that the truth? Why should we worry about tomorrow's problems today? Let's leave them for tomorrow. Besides, by the time tomorrow gets here, they may not be problems anymore. Mark Twain once observed, "I have worried over a great many things in my life, most of which have never happened." Our natural tendency to paint the worst case scenario about the future often robs us of the energy God gives to meet the challenges we face today.

Does that mean that we won't have any troubles to deal with in the future? Not at all. Scripture declares, "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22) But we also have God's promise that he will use those hardships to train us, discipline us, and draw us closer to himself. God's promise to his Old Testament believers still applies to us today: "I know the plans I have for you,...plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" (Jeremiah 29:11).

As long as the future is in the loving hands of God, we don't have to worry about it. For even though we may not know *what* our future holds, we do know *who* holds it.

Synod's Annual Report

Copies of the Synod's Annual Report is now available for 25 cents each through Northwestern Publishing House. To order, go to

www.nph.net/welsproducts

and search the online catalog for item number 388852, or call Northwestern Publishing House at 800-662-6022 (Milwaukee area, 414-475-6000, ext. 5800) 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. CDT